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CATULLUS CARMEN 2

BY EDWIN W. FAY

Against the attacks of Professors Phillimore and Postgate (see V, 217; VII, 1) I would venture a defense of the substantial integrity of Catullus' first *passer*¹ poem. Both these scholars challenge the Latinity of (*cum*) *desiderio meo nitenti . . . (lubet)*, whereas, I admire it as much as Friedrich or Munro ("bright lady of my longing love"), venturing to believe that if either of our recent censors has correctly restored the original, then blind fortune and blundering copyists have surpassed it in true poetry. At this stage of his amour—though that is begging the question—Catullus would scarcely have risked the *bêtise* of taxing Lesbia with a longing for himself.

The truth is that Professor Phillimore in his attack on the Latinity of *cum desiderio meo lubet* has put up a man of straw to batter down. Let us grant that *lucis meae oculos* must rather be expressed by *tuos, lux mea, oculos* and that *desiderio meo* must rather be *tibi, desiderium meum*: let us grant it, that is, for direct second-person sentences; but what of sentences wherein *tuos* and *tibi* must refer to the *passer*, while *lux* or *desiderium* refers to Lesbia, as here, where *desiderio* is very pointedly in the third person?

To what extent had *desiderium*, as a pet name, become a proper name? Is no weight to be attached to the fact that by its ending in *-ium* our noun fell into a class with all the names of mistresses and poppets on the comic stage, such as *Erotium* and *Paegnium*? Did *Desiderio meo lubet* substantially differ in syntax from *placuero huic Erotio* (Plautus *Men.* 670)? To what extent had *desiderium* sunk to a mere ordinary noun, liable to all the range of *coniugium*, which from

¹ In his *Greek Birds*, s.v. *στρούθος*, Thompson goes out of his way to declare his conviction that Lesbia's *passer* could not have been a common house sparrow, and for the general unfriendliness of this bird he refers to Bechstein's book on *Cage and Chamber Birds*. I think we may read between the lines of Catullus' second and third poems that Lesbia's sparrow was a jealous and unfriendly creature. Its general bad character was redeemed by its jealous and exclusive devotion to Lesbia (iii. 7–10). This devotion to a selected person is entirely accordant with Bechstein's tale (p. 249) of the belled sparrow of the Hôtel des Invalides: "It would not allow itself to be touched by any other person, yet was so fond of its master that it could not be induced to leave him, when at last he became bedridden."

Accius on and in Catullus (68. 107) designated a wife? How should *desiderium* differ from "darling," "beloved," τὸ ἐρωμένιον, *puella*?

But to be specific: the objection to *desiderio* or *luci* (for that is Phillimore's instance) in the dative meets its answer by the consideration of Lucilius 1138-41:

Cornelius Publius noster
Scipiadas dicto tempus quae intorquet in ipsum
oti et deliciis, *luci effictae* atque cinaedo et
sectatori adeo ipse suo, quo rectius dicas.

Besides, the dative of Catullus seems almost imitated by Ovid, to his lady's parrot (*Am.* 2. 6. 19):

quid iuvat, ut datus es, nostrae placuisse *puellae*.

This may be compared with Catullus 104. 1:

credis me potuisse meae maledicere *vitae*.

Further examples of a dative are:

Plautus *Curc.*: 11-12:

Egon apicularum opera congestum non feram
Ex dulci oriundum meleulo dulci meo?

Most. 167:

volo meo placere Philolachi, meo oculo, meo patrono.

Professor Postgate's challenge of the propriety of using *nitenti* with *desiderio* may also seem to fall with Lucilius' *luci effictae*. The propriety of *nitens* may be vindicated by Cat. 68. 70, *mea candida diva*; 13. 4, *non sine candida puella* (cf. Horace *Epod.* 11. 27), for certainly *puella*, "mistress," does not seriously differ from *desiderium*, "beloved." As an epithet, there would be analogy between *desiderium* and a proper name. Cf. *Daphnis me malus urit* (Virgil *Ecl.* 8. 83) with *urit me Glycerae nitior*. Certainly *Glycera nitens* would not be bad Latin, and Catullus actually does say (*uxor*) *ore floridulo nitens* (61. 193). If the bride was there *nitens* why not his mistress (*desiderium*) here?

But the question really turns on the usage of *desiderium* by lovers, and the pitiful little salvage of Roman love-speech embalmed in our classic authors, and surely not exhausted in the *Casina* 134-38. *Poenulus* 365-68, ought never to be relied upon to prove a negative. For *desiderium* we might know more if we had an adequate record of Πόθος (two examples in Friedrich, *ad hunc locum*) and Ἰμερος

in Greek but, quite out of literature, a gladiator was featured on the billboards at Pompeii as *totius orbis desiderium* (CIL, IV, 1184), and a bereaved husband, C. Maenius Cimper, paid tribute to his wife as *desiderio* (dat.) *spiritus mei* (*ibid.*, VI, 7579).

Somewhere toward the confines of literature we have an instance of *desiderium* with a qualifying adjective and with *suum*, and in a context distinctly reminiscent of Catullus, viz., in Pliny *N.H.* 11. 148 (cited as 12. 148 in the *Thesaurus*), where we find him speaking of the power of the pupil of the eye to reflect the whole image of a person. He continues:

ea causa est ut plerique alitum e manibus [= "pet birds"] hominum oculos potissimum appetant, quod effigiem suam in his cernentes velut ad cognata desideria sua tendunt.

Why does Pliny in speaking of pet birds use *appetant* and *desideria*, two of the striking words of our *passer* poem? For one of two reasons, not mutually exclusive: first, in full or half-conscious reminiscence of this poem. He called Catullus his *conterraneus*, and had got no farther than the fifth line of his *Natural History* before quoting, with deliberate attempt to improve:

namque tu solebas
nugas esse aliquid meas putare [C. 1. 3].

He alludes there also to *C.* 12. 17, and refers to Catullus by name in at least four other places (28. 19: Cat. 64. 323 [?]; 36. 48: 29. 3; 36. 154: 1. 2; 37. 81: 52), so the only wonder here is that Catullus is not actually named. The second explanation is that *desiderium* was a general pet name belonging to talk with birds. As Pliny here uses it, it corresponds to the pet name *ocellus* of the Plautine lover's vocabulary. For pet birds the *desiderium* was the supposed image of the beloved in the eyes of their mistresses: Catullus' beloved was his *desiderium*, his *ocellus*, and what lover thinking of Clodia "Boopis" (for so Cicero habitually nicknamed her) but might have described her as his *ocellus* (*desiderium*)¹ *nitens*? Cf. Virgil's *oculi nitentes* and other like uses of *niteo* and *nitens* recorded in the lexica.

¹ And one word more on *desiderium* of the reflected image in the eyes. Stephanus in his *Thesaurus*, s.v. "ζμερος," writes: "est etiam Id in oculis quo intuentium amor conciliatur," citing the technological writer Pollux (2.63), a century after Pliny, for καὶ τὸ ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀπορρέον ζμερος, and if Stephanus was troubled for the definition of ἀπορρέον, he should have bethought himself of the philosophical term ἀπορροαί-εἶδωλα (so Hesychius).

I am personally convinced of the integrity of *Carmen* 2 as it stands in a conservative text like Simpson's, and the difficulties raised seem to me to meet their solution if we interpret the poem on the following theory of its composition, viz., that at an early period of their acquaintance Lesbia became angry with Catullus and banished him from her presence (cf. the record of such a quarrel, later on, in *C.* 8). In his efforts to regain admittance he despatched a note superscribed with some form of words such as *Catullus passeri, melculo desiderioque suae puellae*, something to pique angry Clodia into opening the note.

If this reconstruction of the setting of the poem be admitted, it commits us to taking *doloris* (l. 7) as "vexation" and *ardor* (l. 8) as "hot resentment." In brief, I would take *ardor*, and incidentally *dolor*, as substantially equivalent to *ira*. For this definition, note the following statistics:

1. *Ardor* and *ira*.—Lucretius, 3. 289, in ira | cum fervescit et ex oculis micat acrius ardor; Cic. *De div.* 1. 61, irarum existit ardor (cf. Mart. 6. 64. 24, bilis ardor); Livy 5. 41. 4, sine ira, sine ardore animorum ("free from resentment or heat of passion," Spillan); *ibid.*, 1. 10. 3; 24. 30. 1; Cic. *Tusc.* 4. 78; *Phil.* 13. 15; 4. 4. Cf. *ardens* (*ardet*), Cat. 64. 198, "zorn-glühend" (Friedrich), in contrast with 62. 23="liebe-glühend"; Horace *S.* 1. 4. 48; Livy 2. 56. 13; Virgil *Aen.* 2. 575; Cic. *Att.* 2. 19. 5, *Tusc.* 2. 58; Terence *Ad.* 710, ardeo iracundia; Plautus *Cpt.* 594, ardent oculi (of a madman); cf. ardet mente (*Culex* 179); ardet et odit (Juvenal 9. 96).

2. *Ardor* and *furor*.—Cic. *Phil.* 13. 18, quo furore, quo ardore; cf. *Phil.* 3. 3.

3. *Ardor* and *dolor*.—Some glossist to our passage has written *dolor* for *ardor*. The connotation of *ira* is clear in Cic. *Brut.* 277, ubi dolor, ubi ardor animi? *De or.* 1. 197, vi et dolore et ardore animi concitans (note in the glosses a<r>dore animi "indignatio"). But *ardor* comes nearer to the sense of *dolor* (i.e., "pain")—cf. Tibullus 2. 5. 110 and 3. 6. 3 where *dolor* is the pain of unrequited love; 3. 2. 6; 3. 2. 13, where it is the pain of bereavement—when contrasted with *voluptas*, as in Lucretius 3. 251; cf. Cic. *De fin.* 2. 14, inserting (from *Cael.* 37) after *animus ardet nunc meum cor cumulatur ira*; *Att.* 2. 19. 5, ardet dolore et ira. In these passages *ardor* is a heightened *dolor*.

4. In the following passages *ardor* is even an exaggerated *ira*, perhaps; Cic. *Fam.* 6. 12. 4; *Marc.* 24, in tanto civili bello, tanto animorum ardore; *Leg.* 9; Silius Ital. *Pun.* 17. 491, iamque ardore truci lustrans; Livy 6. 13. 2, vultum . . . ardore animi micantem; *Culex* 222, sanguineumque micant ardorem; Laberius 26, ardore ignescitur.

5. Possibly, in our context, *gravis* fastens on *ardor* the sense of "anger," so clearly exhibited in the previous examples by *ardor animi*. We have in

Horace *gravis stomachus* (C. 1. 6. 6) and *graves iras* (3. 3. 30). Cicero furnishes examples of *gravis* with *dolor*, *ira*, *inimicitiae*, *iracundia* (*Tusc.* 3. 11, *graviores*); cf. also *odiosi et graves* (*Rep.* 1. xliii). Ovid also has *gravis dolor*. The adverb *graviter* is combined with *iratus sum* (Terence *Hec.* 623), with *angi* (*De amic.*) and *graviter commotus* is glossed by *g. iratus*. Cf. also Tacitus *Ann.* 13. 36. 5, *quod Corbulo graviter accepit et increpitum Paccium . . . iussit*. Further see Lewis and Short, *s.v. graviter*, and cf. *gravatus*, always of a feeling of vexation. With these examples before me I am not attracted by Munro's definition of *gravis ardor* as a "violent and absorbing passion," even when confronted with a context like *studium et ardorem quandam amoris* (*De or.* 1. 134); cf. Horace *Ep.* 11. 2, *amore percussus gravi*, and, in vs. 27, *ardor* = "love" (see Catullus 62.23, cited in 1).

So many other exegetical difficulties have been raised regarding our poem, however, that I must go yet further in defense of its integrity. The long interval between the address to the *passer* and the introduction to the wish is awkward, but Friedrich's general defense is satisfying: "vss. 1-7 constitute a long-spun-out address, and vs. 8 is not joined to them quite correctly. That is, however, only a trifling inconcinnity, pardonable in colloquial speech." Just as awkward parentheses may be found in Catullus 65. 5-14, and in Horace *C.* 3. 17. 2-9; cf. also Catullus 44. 2-4 and Horace *Ep.* 1. 15. 2-13 and 16-21, where the main verb of the first sentence is deferred till vs. 25.

Difficulty has also been felt with *et solaciolum*, but it is quite hypercritical to object to construing *solaciolum* as one construes *carum nescioquid*. A somewhat new emphasis may be given to this explanation by noting that *et* adds here a virtual appositive to *carum nescioquid*. This is the *et* that Friedrich (*Catullus*, p. 369) renders by *nämlich* in Virgil *Geor.* 4. 64.

tinnitusque cie et Matris quate cymbala circum.¹

A most apposite example for our passage is Horace *C.* 4. 12. 6:

infelix avis et Cecropiae domus aeternum opprobrium,

wherein the *et*-clause does duty for a relative almost. Cf. Propertius 3. 12. 22, *lotosque herbaeque tenaces*, where the *lotus* is the *herba tenax*. There is an excellent collection of examples for this *et* of apposition in Rothstein's *Propertius*, 1. 8. B. 35-36 (p. 56). Rothstein's list, besides the two examples given, contains Propertius 2. 9. 13; 3. 7. 29;

¹ See other examples of *et* and *-que* on p. 367 and cf. p. 145 on *et* = "and that too."

(cf. Thompson, *Pal.*, p. 201), or like C|[~] (cf. Chatelain, *Unc. script.*, pl. 66, col. 1, 3d line from end; Wessely, *Schrifttaf.*, Tab. VI, No. 13, where, in uncials on stone, anno 301, we have C|[~]L <=qui>, end of 2d line, C|[~]λE <=quae>, middle of 5th line; Wattenbach⁴, p. 62, sub V, l. 5). So *quia* as written in Chatelain, *op. cit.*, p. 66, 2d leaf, 1st col., l. 15, looks very like *criia*, and we can but admit the possibility of C|²eso being read *creso* and being transcribed *c̄so*, subsequently expanded to *credo*.¹ As to the propriety of using *quaeso*, it is enough to refer to 76. 23 (cf. 10. 25; 103. 3), and particularly to Tibullus 1. 1. 58, *tecum dummodo sim, quaeso segnis inersque vocer*.

b) An even simpler emendation which removes another of the old stones of stumbling in the interpretation of our poem, is to read vss. 7-8, pointed as a parenthesis, as follows:

(et solaciolum's < ? t > eei doloris, credo).

As a mistake in *ductus*, SUI for STEI is most simple, for TEI (or EEI) in capitals was always capable of being read III, whence VI. Lindsay, *Lat. Txt. Emend.*, p. 87, cites, e.g., *awi* for ALII (*Ps.* 633) and *haec cauata* for HAEC ALLATA.

In vs. 9 the wish with *possem* has occasioned difficulty, but the tense seems to me adroitly chosen by Catullus "to indicate the hopelessness of the wish in the present or immediate future" (cf. Lane, *Latin Grammar*, § 1544), and the tense may have been chosen to make Lesbia ask herself whether after all his return to her was impossible. The problem is one of psychology, not of formal grammar; the occasion was one where emotion was made to seem to triumph over syntactical norms. The change to *possim*, so simple as a problem of *ductus*, so offends against the principle of *lectio difficilior* that I deem it entirely inadmissible, and to read *possem* is to exclude *quaero* for *credo*.

Is there a gap between vss. 10 and 11? The testimony of *Guarini* (which I am unable to gauge) apart, there is not the least need to think so. As to construction, *ut . . . possem* is the apodosis to *gratum est*; cf., e.g., Cicero *Fin.* 5. 83: *utinam quidem dicerent alium alio beatiorem: iam ruinas videres*, where the unreality of *dicerent* is again for the immediate future, and *videres*, for all its

¹ In uncials, *d* for *s* is common; cf. Lindsay, *op. cit.*, p. 88. See also Chatelain, *op. cit.*, pl. 19, 2d col, 4th line from end, where in *sensibus*, *set s* with a closed bottom looks like the delta-shaped *d*.

attraction to the norm of the unreal, means with *iam* "you would soon see." Implied in the wish here is a protasis "*si tecum <et domina tua> ludere possem*" to which the apodosis is *gratum est*. So far as correlation of tense and of word goes, Ellis has adduced a perfect parallel in Martial 2. 63. 3:

Miliche, luxuria est si tanti dives amares.

As the indicative for the *longum est* type needs no defense, it is only a question of combining present with imperfect, and this Catullus does, inversely as between protasis and apodosis, in 23. 22:

quod tu si manibus teras fricesque
non unquam digitum inquinare posses,

6.2:

nei sint illepidae atque inelegantes
velles dicere, nec tacere posses.

Cf. also Tibulli *Pan. Mess.* 197:

 nostri si parvula cura
sit tibi
. . . . non magni potior sit fama Gylippi,
posse Meleteas nec mallem vincere chartas.

Why, in fine, does Catullus adduce the ungirdling¹ of Atalanta in the expression of the delight he would feel in being restored to his mistress' presence? A limited comparison (so Friedrich)? But perhaps more. *Quel malin que Catulle!*

The Romans habitually designated a business immediately in hand by a reference to costumes, as of the *tabellarii* in Cicero *Fam.* 15. 17. 1, *petasati veniunt*; and of a general in *Pansa noster paludatus* (*ibid.*, 3). Cf. *togatus*, *sagatus*, *saga sumere—ponere, ad saga ire, in sagis esse*. In Plautus the *zona* is mentioned as a characteristic part of the dress of an *advena* or *peregrinus* (*Persa* 155 f.; *Poen.* 1008; *Truc.* 954); cf. C. Gracchus *ap. Gell.* 15. 12:

Quirites, cum Romam profectus sum, zonas quas plenas argenti extuli eas ex provincia inanes rettuli.

An angry soldier preparing to depart in dudgeon cries out in the *Merçator* of Plautus (925): *sonam sustuli*. So it may be that in

¹ In its folk-lore aspect the story of Atalanta is illuminated by the following extract from Havelock Ellis' *Psychology of Sex*, p. 60: "Among the Malays . . . the damsel, stripped naked of all but a waistband, is given a certain start and runs off on foot followed by her lover."

the last three verses of our poem Catullus is delivering an ultimatum to Lesbia, to wit: iam diu sonatus sum; nisi tu me revocaris peregre abiero. Perhaps. We can never know.

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